

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend Claims 1, 3, 13 and 15 to read, as follows.

1. (Currently Amended) A developing apparatus comprising:
  - a developer carrying member for carrying a developer;
  - a developer regulating member, contacted to said developer carrying member, for regulating a thickness of a layer of the developer on said developer carrying member; and
    - a lubricant, provided in a contact portion between said developer carrying member and said developer regulating member without the developer carried on said developer carrying member in a state of absence of the developer in the contact portion,  
wherein a charge polarity of said lubricant is opposite to a charge polarity of said the developer, and a weight average particle size of said lubricant is not more than 1/3 of a weight average particle size of said the developer.
2. (Original) An apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein said lubricant comprises spherical particles having an average circularity not less than 0.90.
3. (Currently Amended) An apparatus according to Claim 2, wherein said lubricant comprises polymer particle particles.

4. (Original) An apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein a weight average particle size (pm) of said lubricant is smaller than an arithmetic average roughness Ra value ( $\mu\text{m}$ ) of a surface of said developer carrying member.

5. (Original) An apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein the charge polarity of said developer is negative, and said lubricant comprises melamine resin material particles.

6. (Original) An apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein the charge polarity of said developer is positive, and said lubricant comprises fluorine resin material particles.

7. (Original) An apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein said lubricant has a weight average particle size of  $0.01\mu\text{m}$  -  $1.5\mu\text{m}$ .

8. (Original) An apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein said lubricant has a weight average particle size of  $0.01\mu\text{m}$  -  $3\mu\text{m}$ .

9. (Original) An apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein a coating amount of said lubricant on said developer regulating member is  $1.5\text{g}/\text{m}^2$  -  $15\text{g}/\text{m}^2$ .

10. (Original) An apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein a coating amount of said lubricant on said developer regulating member is  $0.18\text{g}/\text{m}^2$  -  $1.9\text{g}/\text{m}^2$ .

11. (Original) An apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein said developer contains not less than 90%, by number base cumulative value, of particles having not less than  $3\mu\text{m}$  corresponding diameters and having not less than 0.900 circularities, and wherein a weight average particle size X of said developer, and a number base cumulative value Y (%) of the particles having not less than 0.950 circularities, satisfy:

$$Y \geq \exp 5.51 \times X^{-0.645}$$

$$(5.0 < X \leq 12.0).$$

12. (Original) An apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein said developing apparatus is provided in a cartridge detachably mountable to a main assembly of an image forming apparatus.

13. (Currently Amended) A developing apparatus comprising:  
a developer carrying member for carrying a developer;  
a developer regulating member, contacted to said developer carrying member, for regulating a thickness of a layer of the developer on said developer carrying member; and

a lubricant, provided in a contact portion between said developer carrying member and said developer regulating member without the developer carried on said developer carrying member in a state of absence of the developer in the contact portion,

wherein a charge polarity of said lubricant is opposite to a charge polarity of said the developer, and wherein a weight average particle size ( $\mu\text{m}$ ) of said lubricant is smaller than an arithmetic average roughness Ra value ( $\mu\text{m}$ ) of a surface of said developer carrying member.

14. (Original) An apparatus according to Claim 13, wherein said lubricant comprises spherical particles having an average circularity not less than 0.90.

15. (Currently Amended) An apparatus according to Claim 14, wherein said lubricant comprises polymer particle particles.

16. (Original) An apparatus according to Claim 13, wherein the charge polarity of said developer is negative, and said lubricant comprises melamine resin material particles.

17. (Original) An apparatus according to Claim 13, wherein the charge polarity of said developer is positive, and said lubricant comprises fluorine resin material particles.

18. (Original) An apparatus according to Claim 13, wherein said lubricant has a weight average particle size of  $0.01\mu\text{m}$ - $1.5\mu\text{m}$ .

19. (Original) An apparatus according to Claim 13, wherein said lubricant has a weight average particle size of  $0.01\mu\text{m}$ - $3\mu\text{m}$ .

20. (Original) An apparatus according to Claim 13, wherein a coating amount of said lubricant on said developer regulating member is  $1.5\text{g}/\text{m}^2$  -  $15\text{g}/\text{m}^2$ .

21. (Original) An apparatus according to Claim 13, wherein a coating amount of said lubricant on said developer regulating member is  $0.18\text{g}/\text{m}^2$  -  $1.9\text{g}/\text{m}^2$ .

22. (Previously Presented) An apparatus according to Claim 13, wherein said developer contains not less than 90%, by number base cumulative value, of particles having not less than  $3\mu\text{m}$  corresponding diameters and having not less than 0.900 circularities, and wherein a weight average particle size X of said developer, and a number base cumulative value Y (%) of the particles having not less than 0.950 circularities, satisfy:

$$Y \geq \exp(5.51 \times X^{-0.645})$$

$$(5.0 < X \leq 12.0).$$

23. (Original) An apparatus according to Claim 13, wherein said developing apparatus is provided in a cartridge detachably mountable to a main assembly of an image forming apparatus.